DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 283 543 JC 870 282

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TITLE CSS One-Hour Content-Correlated Courses.
INSTITUTION Dutchess Community Coll., Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
PUB DATE Mar 87
NOTE 35p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Academic Persistence; Community Colleges; *Content Area Reading; Course Descriptions; Followup Studies; Grades (Scholastic); Noncredit Courses; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Questionnaires; *Remedial Instruction; School Surveys; *Student Attitudes; *Study Skills; *Teacher Attitudes; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students

ABSTRACT

Dutchess Community College (DCC) in Poughkeepsie, New York, has developed a series of 1-hour, noncredit study skills courses (CSS), which use the content of introductory credit courses as a vehicle for teaching study skills. These course-specific study skills are taught by the instructors of the related credit courses, and stress practical work with note-taking, textbook mastery, exam preparation, and test-taking techniques, as well as specific strategies for the successful study of the subject. To determine the effectiveness of the CSS courses, CSS students and faculty were surveyed for their opinions concerning the courses. In addition, students' grades in the academic course under study and in subsequent courses, grade point averages, course dropout rates, and college retention rates were analyzed. Study findings included the following: (1) 75% of the students said their CSS course helped with the related credit course and 45% said it helped with skills in other courses; (2) faculty were concerned with keeping classes small, providing careful screening and selection criteria, and the questionable value of students taking more than one reading-based CSS course; (3) 65% of the students who took the CSS courses in fall 1985 or spring 1986 received grades of "C" or better in the related credit courses; (4) 64% of those who received a "C" or better in reading-based CSS courses also received a "C" or better in the subsequent reading-based credit courses; and (5) of those students who were enrolled in the CSS courses in fall 1985, 77% were still enrolled at DCC after one semester, 56% after two semesters, and 55% after three semesters. Student survey instruments and results, faculty comments, and a bibliography are appended. (EJV)

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Dutchess Community College
Poughkeepsie, New York

CSS ONE-HOUR CONTENT CORRELATED COURSES

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Dr. Ann A. Weeks, Director
Institutional Research
March 1987

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DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

CSS ONE-HOUR

CONTENT-CORRELATED

COURSES

DR. ANN A. WEEKS
DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
MARCH 1987

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OBSERVATIONS

* Three quarters of the students who took the one-hour CSS content specific courses said the CSS course helped with the content related course. Forty-five percent said it helped with skills in other courses.

* Sixty percent said they would take another one-hour CSS course designed to better performance in an additional academic course. Two-thirds said they would recommend the course to another student.

* One third of the students did not understand the purpose of the CSS course before taking it. Those who did understand the purpose of the course had a significantly more positive attitude toward the course than those who did not understand the purpose.

* Students said the most helpful parts of the course were: study habit skills, notetaking, test preparation, understanding, asking questions, test review, and the slower pace.

* Students said the least helpful parts of the course were: reviewing old techniques, using the study skills component for just another lecture hour, notetaking, repetition, outlining, and lack of credit.

* The most frequent reason students gave for the course not going well for them was "resented the hour without credit".

* After teaching the one-hour CSS courses, most faculty members had positive reactions concerning the courses and felt that their students did also.

* Results varied by course, by professor, and even by classes taught by the same faculty member.

* Common faculty concerns were: keeping class sizes small and location appropriate, providing careful screening and selection criteria, questioning the value of students taking more than one reading-based CSS course, and providing careful explanations to the students about the purpose and value of the CSS course.

* Sixty-five percent of the students who took the CSS courses in the fall of 1985 or the spring of 1986 achieved grades of "C" or better in the related credit courses.

* Sixty-four percent of those who achieved "C" grades or better in related (reading-based) courses achieved "C" grades or better in subsequent reading-based credit courses.

* Of those students who were enrolled in the content-specific courses in the fall of 1985, 77% were still enrolled at DCC after one semester, 56% after two semesters, and 55% after three semesters.

* T-tests showed significant differences between experimental and comparison groups in accounting and behavioral science but not in business math. Comparison groups were not available for other courses.

* An unexpected and beneficial by-product of the CSS courses was the sensitization of faculty to the value and methods of teaching specific study skills for their courses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

* Keep class enrollments small for the CSS classes. Assign appropriate classrooms. Schedule the one-hour courses just before or just after the related academic courses.

* Provide careful explanations to students about the purpose of the course since those students who understood the purpose had more positive attitudes toward the course.

* Establish careful pretesting measures and minimum reading levels. Evaluate texts of the related academic courses for grade level and correlate them to a pretesting level.

* Explore further the value of having students take more than one (reading-based) CSS course. Consider each course separately when evaluating.

* Make the one-hour course voluntary and allow students who prove proficiency during the course to drop the study skills component. Convince students who really need the study skills that it has helped other students succeed and will help them.

* Make certain the course is on the students' schedule. Make certain course outlines are available at the beginning of the semester.

* Let the classes know they are "special" in a very positive way. Consider a booklet for students.

CSS ONE-HOUR CONTENT-CORRELATED COURSES

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

For many years, study skills courses have been taught at community colleges to students whose need for such courses was reasonably obvious. Recently, however, at Dutchess Community College, concerns were expressed for those students who are significantly underprepared for college courses but who are academically just above those historically served by study skills. It was felt that many of these students needed, and could profit from, extra support in their academic endeavors.

In an attempt to solve this problem, one-hour, non-credit study skills courses (CSS) were developed using the content of introductory credit courses as a vehicle for teaching the study skills. These new course-specific study skills courses were taught by the instructors of the credit courses with which the one-hour courses were content related. The one-hour courses were devoted to teaching students how to learn better the particular academic course subject matter. This was done through practical work with note-taking, textbook mastery, exam preparation, and test-taking techniques, as well as through specific strategies necessary for the successful study of the subject. The study skills courses were designed to be academic rather than motivational.

Structures used for teaching the courses varied. Some

faculty taught the study skills separately from the credit course while others integrated it into the credit course. During the 1985-86 academic year, ten classes were "homogeneous", i.e., all students who took the one hour CSS course were also enrolled in its related academic course. The remaining two "heterogeneous" CSS courses drew their students from several different sections.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of underprepared students has been with colleges for almost as long as they have existed. Throughout the years, several different approaches have been used to solve the problem. Clauson (1979) proposed that students could profit by repeating a course a second time. Roueche (1978) strongly disagreed with this practice. He also disagreed with the practice of enrolling students simultaneously in remedial courses and the college courses which require their skills. Cohen and Brawer (1982) suggested allowing students to enroll in a restricted number of regular courses as long as they are provided with academic support services.

Although students at DCC have the option of repeating courses as Clauson (1979) suggests, it was hoped that the experimental study skills courses would help prevent this necessity. To counter Roueche's (1978) objection to offering remedial courses simultaneously, these study skills courses were specifically designed to be used concurrently with related academic courses. They thus provided the supportive academic

services recommended by Cohen and Brawer (1982) and the specific learning tasks in regular courses that Bloom (1980) contends provide major benefits.

Although much has been written in the past twenty years about the skills deficiencies of students who are poorly prepared for college, most of this literature was descriptive rather than analytical or evaluative. It has dealt with remedial education in general or with specific aspects of remedial education. For example, Moore and Morrison (1970), and Morrison, Watson, and Goldstein (1975) emphasize the need to provide emotional counseling, information, and other support services to students in remedial programs. Roueche and Kirk (1973) stress teaching and administrative techniques for promoting accomplishments and retention of underprepared students.

The published literature displays a scarcity of works devoted to the evaluation of remedial or developmental education. Roueche (1968) describes two techniques for evaluating remedial programs and recommends that better techniques be employed to identify students. Maxwell (1979) devotes a chapter of her book to the organization and evaluation of learning services, such as learning centers and tutorial programs. Cohen (1973) and Cohen and Brawer (1982) suggest that evidence indicates remedial courses actually achieve their specific task goals. However, Cross (1976) is not convinced that these skills automatically transfer across the curriculum.

A major problem in evaluation is the lack of consensus

regarding measures to be used. Since community colleges tend to serve non-traditional students, conventional yardsticks may not be applicable. It is often not appropriate to use graduation as a measure of success for remedial students since the goals of these students may not be obtaining a degree but rather the acquisition of skills for a job, for the armed forces, for transfer, or for other purposes. In addition, it is often not appropriate to use cost effectiveness as an evaluation tool since it is particularly difficult to measure.

To evaluate developmental programs, Morante (1985) recommends: assessing the developmental program as a whole, emphasizing summative over formative data, using multiple variables, and establishing a comparison group. This study follows his recommendations in considering all the new courses as a whole, in emphasizing summative over formative data, in employing several variables, and in establishing a comparison group.

Possible evaluative measures that have been suggested for developmental programs include: passing rates in the remedial course, cumulative averages, pre and post test results, exit exams, academic progress, faculty feedback, follow-up interviews, retention after one and after three semesters, grades in subsequent related courses, ratios of successful to attempted courses, and grade points averages of 2.0 or higher in following semesters. For this study, the evaluative measures used included: faculty interviews, student follow-up questionnaires,

passing grades in the related academic course, cumulative averages, retention after one, two, and three semesters, grades in subsequent related courses, and grade point averages.

Cohen and Brawer (1982) claimed that the only conclusive effect of remedial programs nationally is to lower the student drop-out rate. Morante (1985) corroborated Cohen and Brawer's conclusion of lower attrition and this study also found supportive evidence for lower attrition rates.

Morante (1985) found that those students who completed the developmental program had a higher success survival rate. He further found that students who completed the developmental program: 1) had higher grade point averages than students who needed the developmental program but did not take it, and 2) passed successive courses at the same rate as students who did not need the developmental program.

Budig (1986) found the retention rate of developmental students was approximately 52% by the fourth semester. In this study, the retention rate after three semesters was 55% (the fourth semester has yet to come.) Budig also found, as did this study, that there was considerable variation among academic programs.

C. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

At Dutchess Community College, permission had been granted by the curriculum committee for the one hour study skills courses to be taught on an experimental basis. After the courses had

been offered for two semesters, the curriculum committee requested that the Office of Institutional Research evaluate the effectiveness of these new courses in order to help the College decide whether they should be discontinued or offered as permanent courses.

Basically, the College wanted to learn whether students were benefiting from the courses. Specifically, a question was posed as to whether the students taking the one-hour courses were more successful in the content-related courses and subsequent courses than those who had been recommended for, but did not take, the one-hour courses.

D. METHODOLOGY

To determine the effectiveness of the one-hour content specific study skills courses, four different approaches were employed. First, students who took the courses were surveyed for their opinions concerning the courses. Second, faculty who taught the courses were interviewed for their perceptions. Third, the subsequent academic records of students were examined for follow-up effectiveness. Grades in the academic course under study, grades in subsequent courses, grade-point averages, course drop-out rates, and college retention rates were analyzed.

Fourth, an experimental group of students who took the new study skills courses were compared to a group of students who had been recommended for the courses because of similar academic weaknesses but who choose not to take the courses. Grades in the correlated credit courses were analyzed with t-tests, means, and standard deviations.

II. FINDINGS

A. STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES

To obtain information directly from the students concerning whether the one hour CSS courses had helped them, a questionnaire was employed. This one page instrument, which was designed with the assistance of the Developmental Education staff and faculty, consisted of both short answer and open-ended questions. Copies of the instrument, with frequency and percentage results for both groups surveyed, may be reviewed in the appendix.

During the summer of 1986, the questionnaire was mailed to all students who had been enrolled in one of the content-specific study skills courses either during the fall of 1985 or during the spring of 1986. Of the 244 questionnaires mailed, 78 were completed for a return rate of 32%.

Since this response rate was low, and because the questionnaire had been mailed several months after the courses were completed, the same questionnaire was administered to students enrolled in similar CSS content-specific courses during the fall 1986 semester. This time the instrument was distributed in the classroom at the end of the semester by a staff member of the Office of Institutional Research. All students present completed the questionnaire and did so anonymously.

The administration of the same questionnaire to all students present in the classroom in similar courses in the fall of 1986 eliminated the self-selection bias possible in the mail survey.

Results from the two populations were strikingly similar. Three-quarters of the students in both groups said the CSS course helped with the content related course and 45% said it helped with skills in other courses. Sixty percent of both groups said they would take another one hour CSS course designed to better performance in a different course. Two-thirds said they would recommend the course to another student.

Slightly over half of both groups said they were pleased to have been selected to take the course and about two-thirds said they understood the purpose of the course before taking it. Those who understood the purpose of the course were significantly more likely:

- to have been pleased to have been selected,
- to be willing to take another CSS 900 course, and
- to recommend a CSS course to another student.

Students who were pleased to have been selected to take the course said they were much more likely:

- to take another CSS course,
- to recommend a CSS course to another student, and
- to have said they learned more.

Those who were not pleased to have been selected to take the CSS course were three times as likely to resent the course having no credit.

By far, the most important reason students gave for the course not going well for them was "resenting the hour without credit". Twice as many students listed this reason as opposed to the reasons

of personal problems, job conflict, transportation problems, or poor attendance. The only other reason often cited for the course not going well was that the course was just being used as an extra hour for the content related course rather than being used to teach applicable study skills.

When asked what skills they had learned from the CSS 900 courses, students responded:

Mail	Class	
51%	66%	Exam and Test preparation
50%	51%	Notetaking
42%	45%	Test-taking
35%	38%	Textbook understanding
24%	26%	Course vocabulary

Other skills students said they had learned included reading for understanding, highlighting, organization, time planning, and comprehension.

In response to an open-ended question asking what were the most helpful parts of the course, students said: study habit skills, notetaking, test preparation, understanding, asking questions, test review, the slower pace, extra time, text book understanding, vocabulary understanding, lecture explanations, review, organization and outlining.

In response to the open-ended question asking what were the least helpful parts of the course, students said: reviewing old techniques, using the study skills component for just another lecture hour for the correlated course, notetaking, repetition,

outlining, and lack of credit.

In order of frequency, suggestions that students offered for the one hour courses were: give degree credit for the courses, offer more CSS content correlated courses, use the hour for study skills not just another lecture hour, make the course voluntary, provide more time for questions, do not offer the courses, hold the CSS component right before or after the correlated course, use movies and A-V materials, teach it as a three hour seminar, make a tutor available for each student, and provide a guidebook or handbook to coincide with the course.

B. FACULTY INTERVIEWS

Since the one-hour CSS 900 courses were new, a decision was made to interview faculty members teaching these courses rather than survey them through questionnaires. It was expected that interviews would provide a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding than could be obtained through questionnaires. A total of twelve faculty members, who taught the courses in either the fall 1985 or spring 1986 semesters, were interviewed with confidentiality guaranteed. All faculty members teaching the CSS courses had volunteered to do so. They received modest remunerations for attending a two day course development session provided by the staff of the Developmental Education Center.

After teaching the one-hour CSS 900 courses, most faculty members had positive reactions concerning the courses and felt that their students did also. Some faculty members voiced their personal

insecurities about teaching the new concepts. Others told how they had applied new methods learned from the CSS courses to help students in other courses they were teaching.

Results varied from one professor who said no one attended his classes to another professor who said she obtained "super results". Sometimes the same faculty member had different results. One assistant professor commented that she had one class that was very successful while her other one was not. She attributed this to the individual make-up of the classes.

Faculty members approached the extra hour differently. In the academic year 1985-86, three faculty members integrated the extra hour and used it to slow the pace of the course so they could deal with factors like math phobia or in-depth test analyses. The other three faculty members kept the one hour separate for teaching the CSS study skills.

Joel Diemond obtained a good tutor to work after class hours with six or seven students in the fall of 1985 and with two or three students in the spring of 1986. This proved very successful in the fall but not so successful in the spring.

Duane Smith, who taught both the one hour CSS courses and BHS 100, reported that student retention ratios were higher for his courses correlated to the one hour CSS courses than for his BHS 100 courses. Retention rates varied from 73% to 97% for the CSS classes but only from 50% to 60% for the BHS 100 classes.

During the spring of 1986, Bill Bakaitis taught four sections of the same course, one section of which was correlated with the

one-hour CSS class. When Bill compared grades of all the classes, he did not find a significant difference between the one class which took the CSS course and the three classes which did not. The only significant correlation he found was a positive one between attendance and grades.

Some concerns voiced by faculty members teaching the CSS courses and their related credit courses were particular to their individual situations or classes. Others were common themes expressed by most faculty members, e.g., keeping class size small and location appropriate, providing careful screening and selection criteria, questioning the value of students taking more than one (reading-based) CSS course, and providing careful explanations to the students about the purpose and value of the CSS course.

C. FOLLOW-UP DATA

Since the major goal of the study skills hour was to help students succeed in the related academic courses, grades in these academic courses were important evaluation measures. For students taking the CSS courses in the 1985-86 academic year, the mean grade in the related academic course was 1.98. Sixty-five percent of the students achieved grades of "C" or higher. Success rates (judged by either mean class grades or percents achieving "C" grades or better) tended to be higher in behavioral science and lower in history and health. Grades were most variable in business and about average in accounting. The tables on the following page display these mean grades.

GRADES IN ACADEMIC COURSES CORRELATED TO ONE HOUR CSS COURSES

Fall 1985	Average Grade	2.0 or Higher
BHS 103-26	2.29	86%
BUS 101-03	2.45	73%
HED 123-09	1.80	67%
HED 123-10	1.50	60%
HGE 101-06	1.85	50%
HGE 101-07	1.31	44%
Spring 1986	**Average Grade**	**2.0 or Higher**
ACC 101-06	2.00	68%
BHS 103-15	2.56	91%
BUS 101-06	1.67	52%
HED 123-07	1.25	50%
HGE 101-06	1.58	58%
MAT 118-06	2.55	82%
TOTAL	1.98	65%

Since success in follow-up courses is considered a major evaluation measure for developmental students, grades in subsequent reading-based courses were analyzed for students who had taken CSS correlated reading-based courses. Examination of these grades showed that 64% of those who had been successful in the experimental courses (i.e., achieved "C" grades or higher) were successful in the follow-up courses. When semester averages were examined, no clear pattern was discerned.

Another measure often used to gauge success for students requiring study skills is retention rates. Following this paragraph is a comparison of the retention rates (at the College) of students who were enrolled in the content-specific courses with all first-time, full-time students who enrolled at DCC for the fall of 1985.

Although the retention rate for the study skills students was lower than the average for all first-time, full-time students after one semester, the retention rate was very similar for both groups after three semesters.

DCC RETENTION RATES OF FALL 1985 COHORTS

	Attending Spring 1986	Attending Fall 1986	Attending Spring 1987
One-Hour CSS Students (N=122)	77%	56%	55%
First-time, Full-time Students (N=787)	85%	65%	58%

D. EXPERIMENTAL AND COMPARISON GROUPS

It was not possible to provide control groups for each of the twelve one hour study skills courses which were held during the 1985-86 academic year. For the history, health, and statistics courses, all students identified as potentially benefiting from the new study skills courses were enrolled in them. Thus, the only available comparison groups of students were those who were recommended for the accounting, behavioral science, and business math study skills courses but did not take them (Group I). These students were compared to students who took accounting, behavioral science, and business math courses with the new content-specific study skills hour (Group II). As the table below shows, withdrawal rates from the academic courses were found to be higher for the students who did not take the one-hour study skills component.

COMPARISON OF WITHDRAWAL RATES FOR STUDENTS WHO TOOK CSS AND FOR STUDENTS WHO DID NOT TAKE CSS

	Withdrew From Course	Still Attending After Two Semesters
Group I (No CSS)	11%	59%
Group II (Took CSS)	4%	57%

A comparison of mean grades for the academic courses taken by Group I and Group II may be seen in the table following this paragraph. To determine whether or not these mean grades were significant, t-tests were applied. When Group I was compared with Group II, the value of t exceeded that needed for statistical significance at alpha = .01. This indicated that students who took the CSS courses received grades that were significantly better than the grades of students who were recommended for, but did not take, the CSS courses.

COMPARISON OF MEAN GRADES FOR ACADEMIC COURSES OF STUDENTS WHO TOOK CSS AND OF STUDENTS WHO DID NOT TAKE CSS

	Mean Course Grade	Percent With "C" or Better
Group I (No CSS) N = 85	1.20	32%
Group II (Took CSS) N = 127	1.94	73%

To determine if the significance held for the individual courses, Group I and Group II were broken into their component

subject courses (ACC 101, BHS 103, and BUS 101) to analyze the experimental and comparison groups for each subject. The charts following indicate the comparative percents of students achieving grades of "C" or higher and mean grades for courses within Group I and Group II. It is of interest that the BHS 103 and BUS 101 courses correlated to CSS were taught by the same faculty members in the fall of 1985 as in the spring of 1986.

PERCENT OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING "C" GRADES IN GROUPS I AND II
(WITH MEAN GRADES IN PARENTHESES)

	GROUP I (No CSS)	GROUP II (Took CSS)	
	FALL 1985	FALL 1985	SPRING 1986
ACC 101	17% (0.65)	-- --	68% (2.00)
BHS 103	47% (1.41)	86% (2.29)	91% (2.56)
BUS 101	56% (1.94)	73% (2.45)	52% (1.67)

When t-tests were applied to the mean grades for the experimental and comparison groups in each course, they were statistically significant at the 1% level for accounting and behavioral science but not for business math. This suggests that, for the accounting and behavioral science courses, the difference in grades between the experimental and comparison groups may have been due to the extra help provided by the one-hour study skills courses.

III. SUMMARY

A. LIMITATIONS

It could be argued with reasonable justification that students who enrolled in the one hour study skills courses did better because they were more highly motivated and that this was the factor determining their success. Other variables, such as self esteem, academic preparation, native intelligence, or specific professors, might possibly have been significant factors in contributing to student success in these new courses. To prove or disprove these conjectures, instruments would have to be constructed that measured these variables.

Due to deliberate efforts on the part of the faculty, the personal rapport with students in these courses was very positive. Letting students know they were receiving special attention could have produced a Hawthorne effect. If so, perhaps this should be deliberately incorporated into every class taught.

B. CONCLUSIONS

This pilot project indicates that the new content-specific study skills courses show promise of helping borderline students to be successful in related academic courses. Student reaction to the new courses was strongly favorable and faculty reaction was enthusiastic. Grades in some of the related academic courses indicated that the study skills courses may help students to be successful. T-tests showed that the difference in average grades

between students who did and did not take the one-hour study skills courses were significant at the 1% level for the accounting and behavioral science courses.

An unexpected and beneficial by-product of the courses was the sensitization of faculty to the value and methods of teaching specific study skills for their courses. Many faculty members, having always taught in college, had never had a course in how to teach. The study skills courses sharpened their teaching logistics concerning how to give lectures, read texts, and take notes. Some faculty found themselves injecting into their regular classes hints on taking notes, on putting questions in the margins, and on determining what is important.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Many things were learned during the evaluation of these courses. Simple things that could easily be corrected would be the assignment of appropriate classrooms and smaller class sizes. Careful explanations about the purpose of the course should be provided to students since their responses showed that students who understood the purpose were happier to be in the course and presented a more positive attitude.

To achieve more homogeneous groupings and to help insure success, minimum reading levels and careful screening and selection criteria are recommended. Consideration should be given to evaluating the grade level of texts for academic courses to make certain students with a tenth grade reading level are not placed in

courses with a fourteenth grade level text. Since some of the students needed intrusive or outreach counseling, faculty could be instructed in recognizing this and in knowing where to recommend students for assistance. The value of having students take more than one (reading-based) CSS course should be further explored.

APPENDICES

A. FALL 1985/SPRING 1986 STUDENT SURVEYS

B. FALL 1986 STUDENT SURVEYS

C. FACULTY COMMENTS

D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
FALL 1985 & SPRING 1986
A. SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ONE-HOUR CSS 900 COURSES
N = 74

1. Did you have study skills at DCC before your CSS 900 Course?
   32 = 43.2% Yes 42 = 56.8% No

2. Did you understand the purpose of the CSS 900 course before you took it?
   51 = 68.9% Yes 23 = 31.1% No

3. Were you pleased to have been selected to take the course?
   44 = 59.5% Yes 25 = 33.8% No 5 = 6.8% Other

4. Did you complete the course?
   68 = 91.9% Yes 6 = 8.1% No

5. Did the CSS 900 course help you in the course with which it was content related?
   53 = 71.6% Yes 19 = 25.7% No 2 = 2.7% Other

6. Did the course help you with skills in other courses?
   33 = 44.6% Yes 39 = 52.7% No 2 = 2.8% Other

7. Would you take another CSS 900 course designed to better your performance in a different credit course?
   44 = 59.5% Yes 26 = 35.1% No 4 = 5.4% Other

8. Would you recommend the CSS 900 course you took to another student?
   52 = 70.3% Yes 20 = 27.0% No 2 = 2.8% Other

9. If the course did not go well, to what do you attribute this?

   a) 4 = 5.4% Personal problems
   b) 3 = 4.1% Job conflict
   c) 4 = 5.4% Transportation problems
   d) 6 = 8.1% Poor attendance
   e) 7 = 9.5% Already knew skills
   f) 20 = 27.0% Resented hour without credit
   g) 17 = 23.0% Other (specify below)

   _____

10. What did you learn from the CSS 900 course? (Check as many as applicable.)

    a) 37 =50.0% Note-taking
    b) 28 =37.8% Textbook understanding
    c) 38 =51.4% Exam & test preparation
    d) 18 =24.3% Course vocabulary
    e) 33 =44.6% Test taking
    f) 15 =20.3% Other (specify below)

    _____

11. What were the most helpful parts of the course?

    _____

12. What were the least helpful parts of the course?

    _____

13. What suggestions do you have for the one-hour courses?

    _____

DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
FALL 1986
B. SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ONE-HOUR CSS 900 COURSES
N = 198

1. Did you have study skills at DCC before your CSS 900 Course?
   44 = 22.2% Yes 152 = 76.8% No 2 = 1.0% Other

2. Did you understand the purpose of the CSS 900 course before you took it?
   126 = 63.6% Yes 68 = 34.3% No 4 = 2.0% Other

3. Were you pleased to have been selected to take the course?
   102 = 51.5% Yes 83 = 41.9% No 13 = 6.6% Other

4. Did you complete the course?
   181 = 91.4% Yes 14 = 7.1% No 3 = 1.5% Other

5. Did the CSS 900 course help you in the course with which it was content related?
   148 = 74.7% Yes 39 = 19.7% No 11 = 5.6% Other

6. Did the course help you with skills in other courses?
   89 = 44.9% Yes 104 = 52.5% No 5 = 2.5% Other

7. Would you take another CSS 900 course designed to better your performance in a different credit course?
   119 = 60.1% Yes 63 = 31.8% No 16 = 8.1% Other

8. Would you recommend the CSS 900 course you took to another student?
   127 = 64.1% Yes 61 = 30.8% No 10 = 5.0% Other

9. If the course did not go well, to what do you attribute this?

   a) 13= 6.6% Personal problems
   b) 8= 4.0% Job conflict
   c) 7= 3.5% Transportation problems
   d) 13= 6.6% Poor attendance
   e) 36 =18.2% Already knew skills
   f) 42 =21.2% Resented hour without credit
   g) 36 =18.2% Other (specify below)

   _____

10. What did you learn from the CSS 900 course? (Check as many as applicable.)

   a) 100= 50.5% Note-taking
   b) 69= 34.8% Textbook understanding
   c) 130= 65.7% Exam & test preparation
   d) 51= 25.8% Course vocabulary
   e) 84= 42.4% Test taking
   f) 52= 26.3% Other (specify below)

   _____

11. What were the most helpful parts of the course?

   _____

12. What were the least helpful parts of the course?

   _____

13. What suggestions do you have for the one-hour courses?

C. FACULTY COMMENTS

I CSS COURSE

- Good class, It seems to work.
- Student evaluations were very positive. The class was enjoyable and I liked the use of the many examples in the book.
- The CSS classes were more vital, motivated, and interesting to teach.
- The fourth hour gave the opportunity go slower, and review more the day before a test.
- The CSS courses were valuable for those who would not pass and also for those who could barely pass.
- I support the cause strongly.
- For those students who take advantage, the course is helpful.
- I felt happy regarding the course and felt the students were happy.
- I bent over backwards not to compromise the course - gave the same tests - but was more patient and not as frustrated.
- It was not enough to take the course. Students had to do the work.
- Nightly homework plus going over the homework in class helped.
- Next time I would devote more time to time management which is a problem for these students.
- We need to do more grading, structured assignments, and quizzes. If it counts, the students will do it.
- The single most constructive activity would be to meet individually with students. However, the time necessary to do this would make it out of the question.
- We are deluding ourselves if we think it is a study skills problem. It is a motivational one.
- I had a problem because half of the students had already used the book in a previous class and did not tell me.
- Students should not take more than one CSS course for

similar skills.

- Many of the things in this course are in REA 103. I can't see taking CSS for two different reading type courses.

- Faculty who teach the CSS courses should not have to wait until the following spring to be paid for overload.

- If the courses are put in the departments, overloads can be assigned for the CSS courses and then the tail would wag the dog. Developmental ed courses would have no more than 18 students.

- There is concern that the college is using the courses to create FTEs from warm bodies.

- I hope the classes go. They are needed.

II STUDENTS

- My student evaluations said they liked the course and wished other courses had similar components.

- I could not tell the CSS students from the others.

- Even those students who dropped or did not do well in the CSS course still got some benefits.

- Some students felt the course was a waste of their time since they did not receive college credit.

- Some of the students need a whole semester of remedial skills and self-esteem.

- The students thought the course would be a review session in spite of the careful explanation.

- Some students did not realize what the fourth hour was. A couple did not even have the fourth hour on their schedules.

- The course was not what students thought. They expected a personal tutor. They wanted to review.

- The main frustration was student resistance to changing habits.

- The students are weak, passive, and do not know how to study.

- It was necessary to spoon feed note taking and how to highlight major concepts. Follow up was necessary to insure that students did the work.

- These students are not as likely to turn in papers on time and hate reading.

- Students would often not take practice tests if the tests were not to count as part of their grade.

- Discussion was greater in CSS classes but the level of sophistication was lower.

- My CSS class had immature behavior and attitude problems.

- To many of these students, jobs are first, school is second.

III ATTENDANCE

- I like teaching it. There were not many drop-outs. These students want to be successful which is why they are taking the extra hour.

- Attendance was the biggest problem.

- The group was voluntary. Those who were not interested dropped out.

- Attendance was pretty good. 50% of the CSS grade was attendance and class participation.

- I felt discouraged because many in my CSS class needed intrusive or outreach counseling. Attrition was great.

- I encouraged withdrawal of students who did not need the course.

- Not many students stayed in the course which made it lose continuity. Next time I will be more stringent.

- It is very important to only have students who want to be there. The motivated students are fun. The CSS related courses are more fun to teach.

IV CLASSROOM AND CLASS SIZE

- The type of material presented needs small group interaction and suitable rooms, not lecture halls.

- It was a mistake to use the Hudson Hall lecture rooms for this class.

- More than 30 students is far too many for this type of course.

- I felt betrayed because I had been told that classes would be small.

- The environment is important. Tables are much better than lecture halls.

- These classes should never have more than 18-20 students.

- The fourth hour should be scheduled so that it is consistent with the time and place of the other three hours.

V PLACEMENT

- Every entering student should be tested for reading levels. Study skills will not help the student who reads at the 10th grade level.

- The Developmental Education Center did a good job placing students although occasionally a good, but insecure, student was enrolled in the CSS 900 courses.

- We should target the type student who could benefit most.

- Many students who need the course are not in it.

- There should be clear, precise pretesting.

- There should be measures to define the "level above CAP".

- I am concerned regarding the screening to place students in this course. There is a great disparity between strong and weak students. Need a more accurate measure.

VI STRUCTURE

- I had good luck with homogeneous grouping. There was no sense of the class being "dimmer" or their sense of it.

- Homogeneous sections may be tracking to blandness.

- Even though I feel heterogeneous classes have more benefits and are more stimulating, I think attendance is better with homogeneous groups for these classes.

- Having students from another class included in the CSS course did not work out well as the other professor taught the course in a different order.

- I integrated my hour. It was not always possible for the students to know when we were doing CSS work.

VII INTERACTION

- Because there was more time to have students revise, they were learning skills versus being told them.

- There is more time for questions. I am able to talk more than usual and teach more slowly.

- The students participated more in class, were more vigorous, and would really do the work. Even the 4 p.m. class was great.

- It was delightful to have the extra time to get more personally involved.

- It allows the teacher and student to do work together that students would have had to do on their own.

VIII FACULTY LEARNING

- I had higher student participation and closer personal relations with the CSS students than with other students.

- I never had a course in how to teach and doubt if anyone in the department has. So this was a good way to learn.

- It was a humbling experience.

- The course sharpened my teaching logistics regarding how to lecture, read text, and take notes.

- I had to learn study skills myself but then found I injected how to take notes, what to look for, and how to highlight in my regular classes.

- These one hour CSS courses clearly help sensitize faculty.

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